

serviceTALK

Co-creating value within a community



The stereotype of cyber security

Armed Forces Covenant launch

An end to chased tickets: is there a silver bullet?



Armed Forces Covenant: supporting those who serve

itSMF UK are pleased and proud to announce that we have signed the Armed Forces Covenant, which recognises the contribution and sacrifice made by Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families in defending our freedoms as a nation.



By signing the Covenant, our organisation agrees to help ensure that those who serve or have served are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives.

Specifically, itSMF UK will be:

- Promoting the Armed Forces Covenant, the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme and our support for the Armed Forces Community to our staff, members, partners and the wider public.
- Offering a discounted 'individual' membership fee for members of the Armed Forces Community looking to develop a career in, or simply learn more about, IT Service Management.
- Creating a dedicated Armed Forces 'Community of Practice' (CoP) group for members with an Armed Forces connection which will provide the opportunity to network, support one another, and attend focused events with guest presenters (online and in-person).



PROUDLY
SUPPORTING
THOSE WHO
SERVE.

Many of those who leave the Armed Forces move into a career in service management, and the technical and leadership skills developed in the Services can be particularly valuable to organisations with a service management function. Despite this synergy, it's not always easy for Service personnel to make the transition to a civilian role, and itSMF UK are committed to doing all we can to assist them.

This initiative is the brainchild of itSMF UK member Cristan Massey, Lead Service Delivery Manager at cinch and an Army reservist. Until recently Cristan chaired our Design & Transition Community of Practice and has taken on the task of getting the Armed Forces CoP off the ground; he will be reaching out to other service personnel within the membership and devising ways to attract others with a military background to our community.

Cristan is supported in this role by itSMF UK Board Member Valerie Wilson of BT, an ex-reservist and keen supporter of the Covenant who is actively involved in helping former military colleagues to find a new career in ITSM.

The story of how Val and Cristan made the transition from the Armed Forces to service management can be found below. If you're interested in finding out more about the new CoP, please contact membership@itsmf.co.uk

Cristan Massey – it's all about transferable skills

Cristan Massey says he owes a lot to the Army. Aside from his service management role at cinch, Cristan is a reservist Non-Commissioned Officer and Physical Training Instructor at 75 Engineer Regiment, and he continues to enjoy the great synergy between the two sides of his career.

A cadet from the age of 12, Cristan joined the Army at 16. After basic training, he joined the Royal Engineers – a long-established regiment which builds bridges, roads and hospitals around the world and restores water supplies to those who need them. It was here that he started to develop the transferable skills that would prove so useful in his later career, as well as allowing him to focus on his love of technology; he once created an intranet for his unit and ensured

that the infrastructure was in place to support good communications.

Cristan left the regular Army after seven years, but soon switched his focus from PT to IT, finding that he had gained the confidence to explore exciting new lines of work despite lacking the formal qualifications that he thought he needed. This was the start of a career path that took him to the Department for Work and Pensions, FDM, Department of Education and Content + Cloud, before moving to his current role with the high-profile online car retail company Cinch.

Cristan had been out of the Army for less than a year before he returned part-time as a reservist, travelling to remote locations such as Kenya, the Falkland Islands, South Sudan and Belize. In South Sudan, he was part of an international effort to build a UN hospital – **read the full story**. It was here that he was able to develop his teamwork, resource & time management, and communication skills, as part of a group of highly focused specialists tasked with delivering a new facility in a very short period of time.

“The big discovery for me,” he said, “was how many skills are transferable in both directions. Not only have I been able to use my military leadership knowledge to help shape my service management team, I've also been able to feed back knowledge gained in civvy street to my reservist activities. I'm passionate about helping

ex-service personnel to adjust to working life outside the Armed Forces, in the same way that my employers gave me to the opportunity to develop into new roles when I left the regular Army.”

Cristan now devotes much of his spare time to presenting on the value of a military training for service management professionals. He was instrumental in itSMF UK's decision to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and is poised to launch a Military Community of Practice within the membership.

“Ex-service personnel and reservists bring such a lot of value to service management,” he said, “and we should do everything we can to ease the transition from one world to the other.”



Cristan Massey

Valerie Wilson – helping colleagues adjust to civilian life

Valerie Wilson is Head of Managed Services Operations at BT Enterprise and a member of the itSMF UK Board; but alongside her very busy work schedule, she retains an infectious enthusiasm for the military training which helped shape her career.

Keen on the Army from a very early age, Val became an air cadet during her school days and an officer cadet at Queens University. Val attended Sandhurst to complete her reservist officer training course whilst working at BT and she graduated with the Cane of Honour – awarded to the most accomplished student of each 100-strong intake – the only female from Northern Ireland to have won this accolade.

Val continued to juggle reservist duties with her BT role which had seen her being moved into a male dominated role leading a team of BT engineers – the first female at the time to accomplish this, driven by her experience in the Army. By the time she saw active service in Iraq in 2005, she was a Captain in the Artillery, and was stationed at Brigade Headquarters in Basra and away from BT for 12 months. This was a high-pressure role, she recalls, making sure that everything ran

smoothly for visiting dignitaries, but it was also one of the most memorable periods of her life.

After her tour of duty she decided to leave the Army to get married, and returned to her role at BT full time.

Many ex-servicemen and women struggle to adjust to civilian life, but Val believes their training makes them very well suited to service management. In more recent times she has helped to run transition workshops for individuals who are leaving the military – focusing on CVs and interviews, building their confidence and informing them of opportunities within BT that they can apply for.

They are encouraged to follow ITIL foundation training to give them the basics, and then to explore the numerous avenues that a large service management organisation like BT's has to offer.

For example, those with officer and leadership training are likely to be well suited to customer-facing roles, leadership or project management.

Similarly, former soldiers with a more technical background or trade often find a home in second and third-line support where they can put their analytical skills to good use on a specific technology. They often have

security clearance as well, which makes them attractive to Government teams.

“We often talk about command & control and teamwork in service management with the ability to work under pressure,” Val concludes, “and no one understands those concepts as well as those with a military background. I'm delighted that itSMF UK has signed the Armed Forces Covenant to enhance the relationship between our two communities.”



Valerie Wilson